

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

/066 W

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R 171530Z DEC 75

FM AMCONSUL MILAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4459

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL NAPLES

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: CATHOLICS LAUNCH MOVIMENTO POPOLARE

1. IT IS WITH MORE CANDOR THAN PRIDE THAT WE REPORT A  
CONFUSED PICTURE OF A MAJOR DEVELOPMENT IN CATHOLIC POLITICS  
IN LOMBARDY. THE GREAT DEBATE WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN  
DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND THE CATHOLIC MOVEMENT FOLLOWING THE  
REVERSES OF THE REFERENDUM AND THE JUNE 15 ELECTIONS IS  
COMING TO A HEAD. ONE ASPECT OF THIS PROCESS IS THE PAINFUL  
LABOR OF THOSE IN LOMBARDY WHO ARE TRYING TO GIVE BIRTH TO  
A NEW NATIONAL STRUCTURE TO LINK THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC  
PARTY AND ITS FACTIONS TO VARIOUS CHURCH RELATED ORGANIZATIONS  
TO CONDUCT THE COMING POLITICAL STRUGGLE. IN VIEW OF THE  
CONFUSED PARENTAGE, PREVIOUS FALSE LABOR IN MID-NOVEMBER  
AND THE BAND OF POLITICAL MID-WIVES ELBOWING EACH OTHER  
ASIDE, THE OBSERVER CAN ONLY REPORT THAT THE ALREADY  
NAMED POLITICAL NEW-COMER, THE MOVIMENTO POPOLARE, IS  
NOW EXPECTED IN MILAN ON DECEMBER 21.

2. ON NOVEMBER 16, A GROUP OF MILAN DC LEADERS, BELONGING  
TO THE MAJOR FACTIONS (DOROTEA, FORZE NUOVE, BASE), MET  
WITH COMUNIONE AND LIBERAZIONE (CL) LEADERS TO FORM A NEW  
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CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC ALIGNMENT. ABOUT 70, REPRESENTING

VARIOUS CATHOLIC INSTITUTIONS, ATTENDED THE MEETING ON A "PERSONAL BASIS." INCLUDED WERE: VITTORINO COLOMBO, GINO COLOMBO, ANDREA BORRUSO, MARESCO BALLINI, DINO LONGONI,

ALESSANDRO PASTORE, GIUSEPPE RICCA-(THE LAST FOUR ARE ALL MINOR CISL LEADERS) - FILIPPO HAZON, MEMBER OF THE DC LOMBARDY REGIONAL EXECUTIVE; JESUIT PADRE ANGELO MACCHI FROM THE CENTRO CULTURALE SAN FEDELE; GIOVANNI MARCORA, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FROM BASE; ROBERTO MAZZOTTA AND ANTONIO MARZOTTO FROM DC.

3. THE PLATFORM ON WHICH THE DISCUSSION WAS BASED CALLED FOR A NEW SOCIETY RESPECTFUL OF THE HUMAN BEING, SUPPORTING UNITY IN EVERY FIELD, BUILT TO SERVE THE PEOPLE AND NOT VICE VERSA. SUCH A SOCIETY SHOULD BE ANTI-CAPITALISTIC, ANTI-IMPERIALISTIC AND ANTI-MATERIALISTIC AND COULD ONLY BE BUILT THROUGH A MOVEMENT OR A PARTY THAT IS THE TRUE EXPRESSION OF THE PEOPLE. THIS CREDO PREPARED BY CL, CLAIMED THAT SUCH ENERGY CAN BE FURNISHED ONLY BY THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY. IT IS THEY WHO INTEND TO WORK IN THAT SPIRIT.

4. THE MEETING WAS INTENDED TO GIVE BIRTH TO THE "MOVIMENTO POPOLARE." A PRESS RELEASE SAID THAT: "THE POPULAR MOVEMENT IS NOT INTENDED TO SUBSTITUTE ANY OF THE EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS OF CATHOLIC INSPIRATION. IT IS NEITHER A NEW PARTY, NOR A NEW FACTION INSIDE THE DC. IT IS A NEW REALITY TO STIMULATE ACTION IN THE ENTIRE CATHOLIC WORLD, WHICH CAN THUS FIND ITS UNITY AGAIN, ENABLING CATHOLICS TO RENDER A BETTER SERVICE TO SOCIETY". THE DRAFT POLICY STATEMENT OUTLINED THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE MOVIMENTO POPOLARE SAYING THAT IT WOULD BE "A STRONG DEFENDER OF DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES AND OF PERSONAL

RESPONSIBILITY, OPEN TO CONFRONTATION WITH ALL THOSE WHO, IN DIFFERENT SOCIAL REALITIES, SUPPORT THE SAME PRINCIPLES." ACCORDING TO ITS PRESS RELEASE, PLURALISM MUST BE MORE THAN A FORMALITY. IT MUST BE THE TRUE EXPRESSION OF DIALECTIC CONFRONTATION AMONG DIFFERENT CULTURES WHICH ARE ALWAYS TO BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY OF POLITICAL INITIATIVE. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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4. THE PRESENCE OF MILAN DC LEFT WING BOSS MINISTER MARCORA WAS BIG NEWS. BUT THE CORRIERE REPORTED THAT HE LATER DENIED THAT THE MP WAS POLITICAL. IT WAS PURELY A CULTURAL GATHERING.

5. DESPITE THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE ORGANIZERS THAT THE MP WOULD BE LAUNCHED ON NOVEMBER 16, SOMETHING WENT

WRONG WITH REAT COALITION OF CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS  
CLUSTERED ABOUT CL DIDN'T QUITE JELL. THE REASONS ARE  
NOT CLEAR. BUT ONE MAJOR OBSTACLE WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE  
BEEN CATHOLICS WHO ARE BOTH WORRIED ABOUT CL BECOMING  
AN UNCONTROLLED MONSTER AND THOSE WHO FELT THAT THE  
CENTER OF GRAVITY IN THE MP WAS TOO FAR RIGHT.

6. NOW A NEW LAUNCHING IS SCHEDULED FOR MILAN ON  
DECEMBER 21 WITH A NEW PLATFORM (POUCHED SEPARATELY)  
DESIGNED TO TONE DOWN SOME OF THE MORE RADICAL CL  
ECONOMIC PLANKS. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE PROMOTERS IS  
TO CREATE A NATION WIDE MP STRUCTURE TO HARNESS THE  
ENTIRE ITALIAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY TO WIN THE PARLIAMENTARY  
ELECTIONS.

7. THE MOST PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR THIS ENTERPRISE  
IS DON LUIGI GIUSSANI, THE INTELLECTUAL STIMULATOR AND  
GUIDE FOR CL. HE AND MILAN CL LEADER BORRUSO, SEE MP  
AS A LIAISON INSTRUMENT TO GIVE CL A POLITICAL MACHINE  
TO CARRY OUT IN PRACTICE THE IDEOLOGICAL GOALS OF THE  
CL MOVEMENT ON A NATIONAL SCALE. AND ONE CANNOT  
DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH DON GIUSSANI WITHOUT CONCLUDIN  
THAT HE REPRESENTS A CLERICAL CONCEPTION OF ITALIAN  
SOCIETY.

8. THIS DOES NOT MEAN, HOWEVER, THAT CL IS NECESSARILY  
CLERICAL NOR THAT MP MAY BE SO. BOTH ARE SUBJECT TO  
MUCH BROADER FORCES. AND FOR THAT REASON THE FUTURE OF

MP REMAINS A MYSTERY. AT THE MOMENT WE ARE BOTH TOLD  
THAT IT IS NOT DESTINED TO PERFORM THE ROLE SOUGHT FOR  
IT BY CL AND THAT EVERYONE WANTS TO JOIN UP \* BOTH MAY  
BE TRUE IF THE REQUESTS TO ADHERE ARE DESIGNED BY ITS  
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OPPONENTS TO TAKE IT OVER AND TO STEER IT BACK TO  
CULTURAL PURSUITS.

9. PRECISELY BECAUSE THE ENTIRE CATHOLIC UNIVERSE IN  
LOMBARDY IS IN MOVEMENT, THE DECEMBER 21 LAUNCHING IN

MILAN IS BOTH IMPORTANT AND UNPREDICATABLE. IT MAY, OR  
MAY NOT OPEN A NEW PHASE IN LOCAL AND NATIONAL POLITICS.  
BUT DESPITE OUR BEST EFFORTS, WE ARE STILL UNABLE TO  
DECIDE HOW SIGNIFICANT THE MOVIMENTO POPOLARE WILL IN  
FACT BECOME.FINA

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CATHOLICS, POLITICAL PARTIES, POLITICAL LEADERS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 17 DEC 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975MILAN02372  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 04 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <04 JUN 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <05 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CATHOLICS LAUNCH MOVIMENTO POPOLARE  
**TAGS:** PINT, IT  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006